

The Ross Herald's script

Let the world know that the Honorable clan MacAulay is gathered in this royal Burgh of Dingwall to bear witness at an Ad Hoc Derbhfine gathered to choose a Chiefly candidate for the said honorable clan.

I, Ross Herald of Arms, am charged by thr Lord Lyon King of Arms to preside, observe and take note of the deliberations of the Derbhfine, and report in writing to the Lord Lyon any decision made by the Derbhfine.

With the indulgence of all present, I would like to briefly explain the background to what you are about to witness.

'Derbhfine' is a Gaelic word which translates as 'close family', that is family consisting of four generations. In the past if a succession dispute arose in Highland society, the close family would meet and collectively decide on the most appropriate person to succeed.

Over the centuries the composition of a derbhfine has altered and today consists of a minimum of nine people who must be members of an organised clan and are either armigerous, that is entitled to bear a coat of arms, or a Scottish owner of Land outwith a Scottish burgh.

The participants form what can be described as a clan parliament.

If a clan without a chief wishes a specific individual to be nominated as the chiefly candidate, then an Ad Hoc derbhfine is appointed through the agency of one of Her Majesty's Officers of Arms in Scotland, a vote is taken and the name is submitted to the Lord Lyon King of Arms, the chief judge of Heraldic succession in Scotland.

After due deliberation, and one of the criteria is that the chiefly candidate must have lived in Scotland for at least three years, the Lord Lyon would grant the Chiefly arms to the candidate.

Possession of these automatically makes the individual Chief of the Clan. However, under Scots law, the new Chief can be challenged, within a period lasting twenty years by any claimant who feels and can prove a superior claim to the Chiefship.

And so this afternoon you have before you the Ad Hoc Derbhfine which will nominate a chiefly candidate for the Honorable Clan MacAulay.

Allow me to introduce them:

1. Miss Ann MacAulay, Landowner on Lewis
2. Mr. Francis MacAulay, Landowner in Moray
3. Mr Kenneth MacAulay, Landowner in Ross Shire
4. Mr Calum MacAulay, Landowner on Lewis
5. Mr Brian John Ballantyne MacAulay, Landowner in Stirlingshire
6. Mr Diarmid Ian MacAulay, Landowner in Sutherland
7. Miss Katherine Johnston MacAulay, Armiger
8. Robert William Home McCall, Armiger
9. Peter John Dundas McCall of Birkenshaw, Armiger
10. Alasdair Roy MacAulay, Armiger
11. Ian McMillan MacAulay, Armiger, Clan Commander

In due course I will invite them to nominate their candidate in writing. Before then, two clansmen have requested the opportunity to make personal statement to the Debhfine and the assembled company.

I call on Alasdair Roy MacAulay to make his statement.

I call on Ian Davidson McAulay to make his statement.

The Derbhfine and all present have heard the expressed opinions, and the Derbhfine will bear in mind what has been said when I now ask them to write down their nomination for the chiefly candidate.

To these nominations I will now add the postal nominations which have been sent to me.

It is the Unanimous decision of the Derbhfine that Ian McMillan MacAulay is their Chiefly candidate and that name should be forwarded to the Lord Lyon King of Arms to be recognised as Chief of the Honorable Clan MacAulay. I will now ask all clan kin present to show by the raising of hands if you agree the choice of the Derbhfine. Are there any who disagree? Are there any who wish to abstain?

It is apparent that the democratic choice of the clan is that Commander Ian MacAulay, M.B.E. be the chiefly candidate and I call on him to speak to the clan.

With the power vested in me as Ross Herald of Arms I now declare that the Ad Hoc Derbhfine of the Honorable clan MacAulay has completed its business.

Let the world know that Commander Ian McMillan MacAulay M.B.E. is the

Chiefly candidate!